

Horns, and Policeman's Helmet⁶ betray their recent origin; and in the last thirty years that tough little London adventive Galinsoga

has become Gallant Soldier, and the Mesembryanthemum naturalised on the Cornish cliffs has been renamed Sally-my-handsome. Perhaps in another thirty years Fenugreek will be known through Wessex as Fancy Grigsons.

Hilary Corke

6: Moschatel, Honeysuckle, Himalayan Balsam.

THE COLLEGE AND THE UNIVERSITY

THE state of academic freedom in America has recently become a matter of some attention—or shall we say notoriety? Some of this attention has had less the odour of righteousness than of *Schadenfreude*. More important, even the part of it—doubtless the majority—that was sincere in its concern, was lacking in a sense of proportion, in that it assumed a distinctively American phenomenon and problem could be measured by European rules. It is always exhilarating to sound the clarion and rally to the side of the angels—assuming (as we do) that academic freedom is encouraged up there. But the United States is not inhabited by angels; it is not even inhabited by Englishmen.

This misunderstanding may be avoided in the future if some enterprising British publisher—he would probably have to be altruistic as well—were to bring out an edition of a book that has recently appeared in New York, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*.^{*} It is, one is tempted to say, a perfect book of its kind, big (over 500 pages), scholarly, thoughtful, and extremely well-written. And it is one of those rare and stimulating volumes that is even more valuable for the perplexities it encourages us to regard than for the consolation it offers to our advanced opinions.

“IT SEEMS to me a reproach to the land, that ever it should be so with our colleges, that, instead of being places of the greatest advantages for true piety, one cannot send a child thither without great danger of his being infected as to his morals. It is perfectly intolerable; and anything should be done, rather than it should be so.” That was Jonathan Edwards in 1742, and his voice still

rings through the land. To be sure, the United States is no longer the Calvinist country it was in his day. But it is far more Calvinist than even most Americans realise. The member of a board of trustees of a college may in fact be a Catholic or an agnostic; his family may have arrived from Europe only a generation or two ago; he nevertheless considers himself, and acts, as the presbyter of a congregation whose primary duty it is to guard the souls of students and teachers alike from “corruption”—whatever that may mean at any single time. The very structure of the American university encourages him to take on this rôle. In Europe, the teachers and scholars preceded the university and gave form to it, and for this they were rewarded with guild privileges that still provide the pattern of academic freedom on that continent. In America, the founding of the colleges was a lay operation, and for many decades the teachers were young amateurs with no sense of vocation. The result is that, whereas in Europe the professors *are* the college, in America they *work for* the college, which is the trustees.

Up until the latter part of the 19th century, there was no such issue in America as academic freedom. In this, the picture resembled that of contemporary England, and was prettier to the extent that religious oaths were not demanded of either students or teachers. A professor was assumed to be competent in his field, and probably was; but his main task was to provide his students with the model of an educated Christian gentleman—elevated, reverent, uncontentious. The major conflict of this period, which had only an indirect (but important) bearing on academic freedom, was the vigorous but eventually unsuccessful struggle of the smaller denominational colleges to prevent the establishment

^{*} By RICHARD HOFSTADTER and WALTER P. METZGER. Columbia University Press. \$5.50.

of large, non-sectarian, state-supported universities. This animosity still survives, and helps feed an intermittent inquisitorial zeal by state legislatures about the condition of grace in these institutions.

It was in the latter part of the 19th century that the idea of academic freedom came to America from, of all places, Germany. American scholars, who went there to study, returned as men with a vision: the provincial and rather soporific American college was to be transformed into a cultural centre for the sanctified pursuit of knowledge. The conditions for such a reformation were propitious. The universities were becoming larger, wealthier, more influential; the trustees, while not for a moment relinquishing ultimate control, were agreeable to the introduction of quasi-judicial procedures which restricted their power to meddle with the inner workings of the by now huge and complex academic corporation; the replacement of religion by science as the source of authoritative opinion made it possible to see in academic freedom an affirmative ethic—an indispensable precondition of gaining the truth—instead of a merely indulgent absence of constraint. Even the ineradicable puritanical temper appeared to offer no insuperable obstacle: after all, this same temper had always set great store by book learning, and with a brief battle over Darwinism easily won, there was ground for hope that the definition of the “spiritual” function of education would slowly evolve into something more generous.

It would be an error to say these dreams were not realised. In fact, they were to a large extent, which is why Harvard and Yale and Columbia are what they are today. As Messrs. Hofstadter and Metzger remark:

The emergence of the university was nothing less than an educational revolution in the United States. Research took a place along with teaching as a major function. The methods and concepts of science displaced the authority of religion. The academic profession took on, for the first time in a full measure, the character, aspirations, and standards of a learned profession. . . . A self-conscious and well-formulated rationale for academic freedom appeared, framed in terms to fit the new realities of academic life. . . .

What was not foreseen was the unexpected and unprecedented stresses and strains to which the American university would be

subjected in the 20th century. These were provoked by two historic events: the emergence of mass higher education; and the victory of pragmatism over all other philosophies, within the university itself.

THERE are in the United States today some two million college students. It is estimated that, in twenty years' time, the number may approach ten million. A college education is becoming a normal part of the American educational process, from which no one will be excluded. In the face of this fact, the German ideal of a university as a group of devoted scholars all working for the greater glory of *Wissenschaft* was bound to dissolve like a mirage. Of most American students it can hardly be said that they “go” to college; they “are sent,” just as they are sent to elementary and high school. And they are sent to college for exactly the same reasons they are sent to elementary school: to obtain skills necessary for worldly success, at some level or other, and to be disciplined into good citizens and decent persons—to learn, if not piety in the old sense of the term, then at least *pietas*: civic virtue and civic probity. Furthermore, this very “university” to which they are sent is a radically new institution under an old name. It has a department of home economics, a faculty of journalism, schools of business administration, engineering, and farm husbandry. What can the search for truth mean to the herd of young people—conformists by origin, temperament, and destiny—who flock into them?

It is always difficult to combine and harmonise the two functions of scholar and teacher. The purpose of the one is primarily intellectual, of the other primarily moral. It has long been recognised, in all countries, that a teacher at the lower rungs of the mass educational ladder does not have that academic freedom which is due in principle to a university professor: his pupils have only a limited capacity for—and a faint-hearted interest in—truth, and in his task the emphasis is on the formation of their character rather than the substantial liberation of their minds. The average American university student is regarded by his family and community as a ‘minor’—as he usually is, to all intents and purposes, despite his years. It is only too easy for all the puritan passions to

be called into play when the impression gets about that the college *boy* or college *girl* (the terms themselves are significant) is being exposed to "dangerous" doctrines and persuasions.

This difficulty has been compounded by the extraordinary gulf that has opened, in the course of the past sixty years, between the states of mind—the "ideologies," if you will—of the academic world and the nation as a whole. Pragmatism is often thought of as an intrinsically American philosophy. It is, but as a philosophy—agnostic, sceptical, free-thinking—it characterises only the American academy; the rest of the country is often pragmatic enough in its worldly dealings, but it certainly does not accept pragmatism as a philosophy of life. As Santayana once observed:

While the sentiments of most Americans in politics and morals, if a little vague, are very conservative, their democratic instincts, and the force of circumstances, have produced a system of education which anticipates all that the most extreme revolution could bring about; and while no one dreams of forcibly suppressing private property, religion, or the family, American education ignores these things, and proceeds as much as possible as if they did not exist.

IT is all very well for the American Association of University Professors to state that a university "should be an intellectual experimental station, where new ideas may germinate and where their fruit, though still distasteful to the community as a whole; may be allowed to ripen." This is doubtless what a university should be. In some ways, it is a description of what the medieval university rather deviously was. But what has this ideal to do with the realities of American college life, where most of the students will get their diploma without knowing a hypothesis from a syllogism? It is one of those paradoxes that pragmatists so detest, that the philosophy of pragmatism, nurtured on the democratic spirit and imbued with democratic fervour, should offer an excellent prescription for the training of an élite, but should have little bearing on the education of the populace as a whole, and should be vehemently rejected by that populace. It is no longer the case, as it once was, that a professor might be fired for daring to criticise a powerful vested interest: the principle of academic freedom is too solidly established for that. But it is cor-

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respondingly easier today to get the community as a whole worked up over the "un-American" attitudes that are supposedly being sponsored by the higher learning. In fact, of course, these attitudes—comprising the general outlook of pragmatism—are superbly American, and could have originated nowhere else; only they are not accepted by most Americans.

Now that the McCarthyist fever seems to have passed, we shall not hear very much about academic freedom in the United States. But the whole problem antedates Senator McCarthy, and survives him. It is not a question of a few notorious "cases" but of a fundamentally intractable situation. Not until there is a structural reform of higher education, reflecting some consensus about the ends of education in its various stages, will the issue cease to be bothersome. Which is to say: not until the problem is resolved of giving a higher education to *all* youth while preserving the highest standards of inquiry—and this is the very problem of democratic education itself. One suspects that, if it is America's problem today, it will be shared by others tomorrow.

Irving Kristol

NEW ART BOOKS

Books To Be Treasured?

SINCE a reproduction gives us a picture without its scale and texture, we try to reconstruct these in our heads. And there is a conflict here. For instance, looking at the remarkable plate of the "Origin of the Milky Way" in *The National Gallery, London*, our memories and intuitions of the picture collide with the actual facts in front of us; for it is in the nature of design that it returns our attention to and enhances our awareness of the surface that bears it, and we discover that it is in this case the page, its texture, its layout, even the way in which the print is mounted, that is occupying more and more of our attention. Here certainly is an encouragement to art books to turn themselves into Fine Editions. Consciousness of the book itself seems to become greater in ratio with the accuracy and richness of the reproduction and also with the dimensions of the book. The more brilliant the colour and textural suggestiveness of the plates and the less easy the pages are to manage, to pocket, to flip, the more do the plates seem like pictures instead of reproductions of pictures.

The National Gallery, London, with its arty and awkward layout and its great weight, demands to be handled reverently: it is, as they say, a book to be treasured. It is not easy to say what else it is good for; there is little that it can do for the student, in spite of the accuracy of the plates. He cannot easily or truly compare one

plate with another—each is too vivid, too complete. A museum like this may not have walls but it has hard covers and the air between them is stifling. Accuracy can be misleading and we must set against this kind of art book its opposite, the book that gives a partial and uniform abstract of a large number of pictures, books such as the little Editions Braun *Les Maitres* (among their new titles are Seurat, Jongkind, Bourdelle), the Hyperion Miniatures (new titles include Bonnard and Matisse), or, for that matter, the invaluable illustrated catalogues of the National Gallery of before the war. It does not matter that on these smudgy and handy pages important pictures may be reduced to a few square inches, or that (in the Hyperion series) the colours may be fantastically travestied. At least there is not the continual nuisance of holding the book away from you so that the page can be seen as a shape; the pattern, the characteristic formula of each picture is there, and there are many others which can be speedily compared. Unobtrusive books like these put the least interference between the reader and the picture.

Pocket art books like Braun's succeed where the more ambitious Skira monographs *The Taste of Our Time* only half succeed. In these, all the plates are in colour. The colour itself is beautifully balanced (surely grey has rarely been shown so well without loss of adjustment of

The following are the publications noticed in Andrew Forge's survey of recent picture-books:

- The National Gallery, London.** By SIR PHILIP HENDY. Thames and Hudson. £6 6s.
Seurat. By JOHN REWALD; **Jongkind.** By GEORGES BESSON; **Bourdelle.** By EMMANUEL AURICOSTE. Paris: Braun; London: Soho Gallery. 3s. 6d. each
Matisse. By GASTON DIEHL; **Bonnard.** By RAYMOND COGNAT. Hyperion Press. 3s. 9d. each
Manet. By GEORGES BATAILLE. Geneva: Skira; London: Zwemmer. 35s.
Ivon Hitchens. By PATRICK HERON; **Graham Sutherland.** By EDWARD SACKVILLE-WEST. Penguin Books. 7s. 6d. each
Toulouse Lautrec. By R. H. WILENSKI; **Japanese Screen Painting.** By BASIL GRAY. Faber and Faber. 9s. 6d. each
Cézanne. By ALAN CLUTTON-BROCK. Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.
The Selective Eye. Edited by GEORGES and ROSAMUND BERNIER. Zwemmer. 45s.
Van Gogh, drawings and water-colours. By DOUGLAS COOPER. Macmillan. 35s.
The Life of the Buddha. By AVRIL DE SILVA-VIGIER. Phaidon Press. 47s. 6d.